

clearly identified Federal candidate, is a campaign ad and would come under campaign finance laws not just 60 days to an election, but 365.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is we seek to call these sham issue ads what they are: Campaign ads. One of the significant side effects of that is that by doing so, we prevent both corporate and union money being utilized in these advertisements. Right now, it is the law that corporate money and union dues money cannot be used in campaign ads.

The third thing we seek to do is to improve the Federal Elections Commission's disclosure and enforcement. We provide for disclosure on the Internet electronically, and that within 20 days to an election, contributions and expenditures of \$1,000 or more must be disclosed every 24 hours.

We have other miscellaneous aspects to the bill. We ban unsolicited franked mass mail 6 months to an election, and we make sure that foreign money is illegal, and that fund-raising on government property is illegal. The reason why it has not been illegal today is that soft money is not viewed as campaign money and, therefore, it does not come under the campaign law.

The bottom line is: we ban soft money, the unlimited sums from individuals, corporations, labor unions and other interest groups; we recognize the sham issue ads for what they truly are, campaign ads; and, we improve FEC disclosure and enforcement.

We have debated this bill for a long time. This is not a new piece of legislation that is coming to the floor of the House. We were promised a vote last year, but did not receive it, in February or March. We were then finally promised a vote, and under what is clearly a very open and frankly fair process, we were allowed 60 amendments to our bill. Some of those were gutting amendments, and some of those were "siren call" amendments that one would want to vote for, but then it broke apart a coalition.

Fortunately, we have repelled every one of these amendments. Now the question is will we pass Meehan-Shays legislation; will it become Queen of the Hill in competition of the other substitutes that will follow this week? Will, at the end, when it becomes and if it becomes the Queen of the Hill legislation, will it be sent to the Senate?

Mr. Speaker, I hope and pray we will do our job and send this bill to the Senate. We can begin that process by voting for it tonight.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 12 p.m.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 53 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 12 p.m.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska) at 12 noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We are thankful, O God, for all Your blessings so freely given to us and to all people. We know that these gifts are as high and as deep and as wide as Your mercy and as abundant as Your grace. You have blessed us in ways that are more than our deserving and greater than our ability to grasp. And so we pray, O gracious God, that as we are thankful for what You have done for us in the past, we will continue to appreciate Your goodness to us in all the days to come.

In Your name, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PALLONE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

PRESIDENT VETOES BILL ALLOWING TAX-FREE EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, H.G. Wells once said, "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe."

Well, two weeks ago special interests, liberals, and the President gave in to catastrophe, putting our children's education, their future, and this Nation at risk.

On July 21 of this year, the President dashed the hopes of millions of Americans, the parents of millions of children, by vetoing a bill that would have allowed parents to set up tax-free education savings accounts.

It is truly a shame that giving parents more of an opportunity to save for their children's education is now a partisan issue.

This unfortunate veto reminds me of a saying from one of my high school Latin classes: "Via ovicpitum dura

est." For you rocket scientists out there who never took Latin, "the way of the egghead is hard."

The President is now on record as thinking that parents who save for their children's education are doing a disservice to them. This is truly a ridiculous notion.

Let us support our children. Let us support their future. I urge all my colleagues not to let catastrophe win but to override the President's veto on education savings.

SUPPORT DEMOCRATS' PATIENTS BILL OF RIGHTS

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership has succeeded in steam rolling its HMO bill through the House, and patients should beware.

The Republican bill is far worse than current law and riddled with loopholes. When you compare it to the Democrats' Patients Bill of Rights, you find there is no comparison at all.

I just want to mention one negative aspect, just one negative aspect, of the Republican bill. It does not guarantee them access to a specialist. Under the Democratic bill, if they had cancer they could go directly to an oncologist. Under the Republican plan, they would still have to go see their primary care physician for a referral and there is no guarantee that they would get to see a specialist if they need one.

Under the Republican bill, if they need to see a specialist outside of their HMO network and their HMO says no, they are out of luck.

The Democrats' Patients Bill of Rights ensures that they will be able to go outside of their network at no cost to them if they need to see a specialist that their HMO does not have.

Mr. Speaker, the President has said that he will veto the Republican bill if they send it to him in its current form, and the do-nothing 105th Congress is running out of time.

Let us send the President a bill he will sign, one that is written for patients, not insurance companies. Support the Democrats' Patients Bill of Rights.

JUDGE STARR DOING A GOOD JOB

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, Judge Starr was appointed by a 3-judge panel to investigate allegations of criminal conduct by the White House. Mr. Speaker, he has compiled a remarkable record.

Although we would never know if we were watching TV today, Judge Starr has been perhaps the most single independent successful counsel in history. Fifteen guilty pleas or convictions thus far. Fifteen. And yet, the untruth gets repeated over and over again